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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 L-03 IO-13 CG-00 DOTE-00 AF-10
PA-01 /077 W
----------015269 231206Z /20
R 220844Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 5563

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PLOS, CGEN
SUBJECT: GOG REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING RELEASE OF GREEK FLAG VESSEL SEIZED BY SOMALIA

1. EMBASSY HAS BEEN APPROACHED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTRY FOR ASSISTANCE AT MOGADISCIO FOR THE RELEASE OF THE GREEK FLAG VESSEL LORD BYRON. LATTER WAS SEIZED IN CONNECTION WITH A COMMERCIAL DISPUTE IN 1974. ALTHOUGH THE GOG WAS SUCCESSFUL IN OBTAINING RELEASE OF THE CREW AFTER SEVEN MONTHS' CONFINEMENT ON THE VESSEL, IT HAS BEEN UNABLE TO EFFECT THE RELEASE OF THE VESSEL ITSELF.

2. IN DISCUSSING ABOVE, FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL PETROUNAKOS STATED THAT GOG IS SERIOUSLY CONCERNED RE ACTION BY OTHER GOVERNMENTS IN SEIZING AND REFUSING TO RELEASE GREEK FLAG VESSELS. HE NOTED THAT IN ADDITION TO SOMALI ACTION, THREE VESSELS HAVE BEEN HELD BY ANGOLAN AUTHORITIES. AMBASSADOR PETROUNAKOS NOTED THAT GOG, NOT HAVING A RESIDENT AMBASSADOR AT LUANDA, HAD SOUGHT HELP FROM THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT, AND SUBSEQUENTLY RECEIVED SUBSTANTIAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR IN LUANDA. GOG WONDERS IF USG WOULD BE WILLING TO BE HELPFUL IN MOGADISCIO.
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3. AT THIS POINT GOG DOES NOT KNOW PRECISELY WHAT ASSISTANCE IT MAY REQUIRE, BUT DOES INTEND WITHIN THE NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS TO SEND A FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL, AND THE GREEK AMBASSADOR TO SUDAN TO MOGADISCIO, AND HOPES THAT THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR WOULD BE WILLING TO RECEIVE THE MISSION, PROVIDE ADVICE, AND, PERHAPS, ASSISTANCE, ALTHOUGH THE LATTER IS NOT BEING REQUESTED

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AT THIS TIME.

4. AMBASSADOR PETROUNAKOS ADDED THAT HE WILL VISIT ROME NEXT WEEK FOR THE PURPOSE OF MEETING WITH THE SOMALI AMBASSADOR, WHO ALTHOUGH ACCREDITED TO GREECE, RESIDES AT ROME. SUBSEQUENT TO THAT MEETING HE WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH US AGAIN CONCERNING THE TIMING OF THE MISSION TO MOGADISCIO, AND POSSIBLY WITH A SPECIFIC REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE.

5. EMBOFF INFORMED AMBASSADOR PETROUNAKOS THAT EMBASSY WOULD RELAY ABOVE TO DEPARTMENT AND MOGADISCIO, AND ALTHOUGH IT UNCERTAIN FROM HERE WHAT PRACTICAL ASSISTANCE MIGHT BE POSSIBLE, EMBASSY MOGADISCIO MIGHT HAVE SUGGESTIONS TO OFFER.
MCCLOSKEY

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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